

REMARKS

Claim the rejection of claims 1-3, 5-9, and 15-18 under the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and the objection to the amendment under 35 U.S.C. § 132 are respectively traversed. It is respectfully contended that the claims did not introduce new matter and that the subject matter of these claims was described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor, at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

For example, from line 17 of page 12 through line 6 of page 13, the specification describes a first continuous flowpath which includes the filter media 24 of four filters 14, 16, 18, 20. In line 14 of page 16 through line 10 of page 17, the specification describes a second continuous flowpath which includes the filter medium of one of the filters 14 but excludes the filter media of the other filters 16, 18, 20. Further, in lines 1 and 2 of page 26 the specification states that the first and second continuous flowpaths may alternatively be associated with separate filtration means and have no common filtration means. Thus, it is respectfully contended that the specification as originally filed expressly conveyed to one skilled in the art that the first and second continuous flowpaths each include a filtration means, and that the filtration means of the first and the second continuous flowpaths may or may not have common filters.

The rejection of the claims under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112 is also respectfully traversed. Each of independent claims 1, 10, 19, and 22 define a filtration system which includes a filtration means or a plurality of filters. Further, each of these claims defines a filtration system which includes one or more flowpaths. It is respectfully contended that the term flowpath is a well defined term of art. According to the USPTO database the term "flowpath" appears in 3,656 patents issued since 1976, including:

Patent No.	Title
6,521,127	Modular Filtration Systems and Method
6,461,513	Secondary-Flow Enhanced Filtration System
6,187,202	Electrolysis Gas to Lift a Filtered Liquid
5,944,999	Modular Filtration System
5,788,858	Mobile Water Purification Unit With Modular Dechlorination Input Stage
5,628,909	Membrane Filters With Corkscrew Vortex Generating Means
5,500,113	Reverse Osmosis Water System

The term flowpath is thus clearly a definite, structural term of art which may include any arrangement of elements, such as conduits, pipes, lines, tubing, channels, manifolds, filters, housing or other structures, which define a fluid circuit.

The rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hartmann, U.S. Patent No. 5,693,229 (hereinafter Hartmann) is respectfully traversed. For example, Hartmann fails to disclose or suggest a filtration system including a first continuous flowpath and a second continuous flowpath having a lower volume than the first continuous flowpath, as set forth in independent claim 1 and independent claim 10. Hartmann fails to disclose or suggest a filtration system comprising a plurality of filters and a manifold wherein the system is selectively operable to pass fluid from the manifold to at least one but not all of the filters, as defined by independent claim 19. Finally, Hartmann fails to disclose or suggest a filtration system which is selectively operable in a first state in which fluids circulate throughout a first continuous flowpath and in a second state in which fluids circulate around a second flowpath, as set forth in independent claim 22. Consequently, Hartmann fails to render obvious any of the independent claims or any of the claims which depend from these independent claims.

Conclusion

The application is considered in good and proper form for allowance, and the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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